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RUEHUNV/USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA IMMEDIATE 0126
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 002278

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FOR ISN/MNSA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/08/2019

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IAEA, NPT, TH

SUBJECT: THAI THOUGHTS ON NPT REVIEW AND HOPES FOR BANGKOK
(SEANWFZ) TREATY

REF: STATE 83600

Classified By: Pol Counselor George P. Kent, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) We met September 4 with Cherdkiat Atthakor, Director of the MFA's Peace, Security and Disarmament Division, to discuss reftel questions regarding the NPT review cycle. Cherdkiat welcomed President Obama's prioritization of non-proliferation concerns and of arms control. The approach was a wind of change, Cherdkiat said. The Thai MFA looked forward to working closely in the coming months with the U.S. and the international community on the NPT review. Cherdkiat described Thailand's approach to nuclear non-proliferation regimes as a maintaining a balance between the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the peaceful use of nuclear power.

12. (C) Regarding the agencies responsible for the development of Thai non-proliferation policy, the MFA has the leading role. Nonetheless, Cherdkiat said it was often difficult to garner concurrence from other Thai agencies on non-proliferation issues. The National Security Council formally played a coordinating role, but a lack of staff and a focus on issues related to the southern insurgency contributed to a more inactive role for the NSC. The Ministry of Defense was similarly passive in regard to non-proliferation issues. In comparison, the Ministry of Commerce had taken a more active role on non-proliferation issues due the Thai economy being export-oriented.

HOPES FOR THE BANGKOK TREATY (SEANWFZ)

13. (C) Cherdkiat stressed that the Thai government's current non-proliferation efforts were focused on Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (the Bangkok Treaty or SEANWFZ). As the ASEAN Chair, Thailand would introduce a resolution in support of the treaty at the upcoming United Nations General Assembly, as had been done in 2007. Cherdkiat hoped that President Obama's emphasis on non-proliferation would lead to a change in USG attitude towards the Bangkok Treaty. Noting that the U.S. was the only nation to vote against the resolution in 2007 (France, Israel, Micronesia, Palau, the U.K., and Northern Ireland abstained), the Thai government hoped that the U.S. would support the resolution, or at least abstain from the voting this year. The resolution supporting the Bangkok Treaty would be non-binding. It was intended only as a political

statement, and a vote against the resolution would send the wrong signal, Cherdkiat said.

¶4. (C) We referred to a 2002 letter to ASEAN from the French on behalf of the U.S., UK, Russia, and France that had raised specific concerns with language in the Bangkok Treaty and suggested that a response to the letter from ASEAN or Thailand as ASEAN Chair would help in facilitating USG discussions on the Treaty. Cherdkiat said that the Chinese government had told the MFA that China was in favor of the Bangkok Treaty but would wait for a unified P5 position. In addition, the Russians had informally indicated support for the Bangkok Treaty, pending agreement by the U.S., France and the U.K.
JOHN